

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW CONTENDER FOR MONTREAL'S CITY HALL

1. NEW LOCAL POLITICAL PARTY FORMED IN MONTREAL LAST EVENING BY MUNICIPAL ACTION GROUP (MAG), AN ORGANIZATION OF ESSENTIALLY MODERATE URBANISTS WHO HAVE BEEN GATHERING WEEKLY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS TO WORRY ABOUT "WHITHER MONTREAL?" THEY HAVE NOW DECIDED CITY'S SALVATION LIES IN THEIR TAKING POWER IN UPCOMING NOVEMBER ELECTION.

2. FOUNDING MEMBERS INCLUDE TWO CITY COUNCILMEN, NICK AUF DER MAUR AND BOB KEATON, ORIGINALLY ELECTED AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THEN-NEW MONTREAL CITIZENS MOVEMENT (MCM) THAT SHOCKED DRAPEAU FORCES BY WINNING ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF SEATS IN 1974. MCM LEADERSHIP AND RHETORIC BECAME SO RADICAL, HOWEVER, SOME HALF-DOZEN ELECTED MEMBERS INCLUDING AUF DER MAUR AND KEATON HAV RESIGNED.'

3. MAG UNLIKELY PRESENT SUCH AN IMAGE. IT DOES SHARE, HOWEVER, ANOTHER WEAKNESS OF MCM, THAT OF BEING AN AMALGAM OF DISPARATE INTERESTS: GREEN SPACES, "SAVE MONTREAL FROM THE DEVELOPERS", ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNERS, ETC. AS MCM EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN, IT IS DIFFICULT TO FIND LONG-LASTING ADHESIVE WHEN ONLY BOND IS
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"WE NEED A CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION."

4. SPECULATION ABOUNDS THAT SERGE JOYAL, FEDERAL MP FOR MAISON-NEUVE-ROSEMONT, MAY BE MAG CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR, OPPOSING JEAN DRAPEAU THIS FALL. JOYAL, ALSO FOUNDING MEMBER OF NEW GROUP, HAS ACKNOWLEDGED INTEREST IN MAYORALTY ON EARLIER OCCASIONS.

5. COMMENT: PARTY FORMATION COMES AMID CONTROVERSY OVER GOQ
PLAN TO CHANGE MUNICIPAL ELECTORAL RULES PRIOR NOVEMBER'S
ELECTIONS. PROPOSED CHANGES INCLUDE INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CITY
DISTRICTS, EACH ELECTING ONE COUNCILLOR, IN LIEU OF PRESENT 19
DISTRICTS MOST OF WHICH ELECT THREE COUNCILLORS. WHICHEVER
SYSTEM IN EFFECT, HOWEVER, IT WOULD APPEAR DRAPEAU'S CIVIC
PARTY LIKELY BENEFIT FROM DIVIDED OPPOSITION. JOYAL WOULD BE
INTERESTING AND POSSIBLY FORMIDABLE OPPONENT IF ELECTIONS HELD
UNDER PRESENT LAW, WHICH PROVIDES FOR DIRECT ELECTION OF MAYOR.
ANOTHER PROPOSED CHANGE, HOWEVER, WOULD REQUIRE MAYORALTY CANDIDATE
TO WIN SEAT AS A COUNCILLOR, HEAD OF MAJORITY PARTY TO BECOME
MAYOR. JOYAL'S WILLINGNESS GIVE UP FEDERAL SEAT FOR CRACK AT
MAYORALTY MAY WELL HINGE, THEREFORE, ON WHETHER NEW LAW IN EFFECT
THIS FALL, AS IT WOULD TAKE CONSIDERABLE OPTIMISM ON THEIR PART
TO THINK MAG LIKELY BE MAJORITY PARTY AT CITY HALL ON NOVEMBER 13.
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